THE

RAGGED SCHOOL UNION Magazine.

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Original Papers.

SCENES AND SIGHTS IN LONDON.

No. V.

DOLLY SHOPS AND PENNY THEATRES.

THE numerous temptations to which the children of poverty and neglect are exposed, should render them still more the objects of deep commiseration. To educated children the adage may truthfully apply, that "to be forewarned is to be forearmed;" but around the subjects of destitution and ignorance there is no such protection thrown. For every criminal impurity their moral beings become open receptacles; and, in the absence of regulating principles, they become the unconscious victims of outward temptations, and are thus hurried into still greater depths of hopeless depravity. The child, born in a garret or cellar, where he experienced a continued struggle for life—his eyes accustomed to sights the most indecent, and his ears to oaths and "filthy communication," will find an atmosphere and company most congenial to his feelings in the gambling sweetmeat shop, or the penny theatre. To their attendance at such places we should have no objection, were they likely to improve their character, or even allow them to escape uninjured, for the young require both recreation and amusement. But such places as those already mentioned—and, unfortunately, every lane and low street in London is full of them—are so immoral in their character, so ruinous in their effects, that we believe they ought to be as strictly prohibited by law, as they are condemned by religion and morality. For this reason, we shall feel it our duty to bring the subject repeatedly before our readers, when likely to prove of practical utility; not that they may be tempted, from mere curiosity, to visit them, but rather that they may use their influence in effecting their suppression, or, what

is better still, depriving them of their juvenile supporters by providing more wholesome substitutes.

It will be remembered that, several years ago, the system of gambling carried on in connection with the low sweetmeat shops was suppressed by the authorities. Since then, an equally injurious, though more secret system, has been extensively adopted, and liberally patronised. Although strictly illegal, yet so little attention has been paid to them by the police, that the proprietors of these places profess entire ignorance of their guilt. Through the assistance of the Superintendent and Committee of the Hopkins Street Ragged School, more light has been thrown upon the subject, and, for the present at least, an effectual stop put to the nefarious traffic in that neighbourhood. As in most other neighbourhoods where Ragged Schools are situated, very similar practices are carried on, we extract the following account from a weekly newspaper, as showing the state of the law on the subject, and affording encouragement to those who may seek to remove such temptations out of the way of their children:—

"*Henry Pratt*, the proprietor of a sweetmeat shop, No. 12, West Street, was summoned before Mr. Hardwick for keeping a public instrument, used in a certain game, for public use, without being duly licensed so to do, he not holding a victualler's license for the premises where such instrument was kept. The origin of the proceedings against the defendant, and in case the complaint was not abated against many others, was this. The Superintendent of the Hopkins Street Ragged School, finding the scholars rapidly diminishing on Sundays, instituted an inquiry into the cause, and ascertained that the boys were drawn away into petty gambling shops, where sweets and lollypops were sold, merely as a cover to gambling transactions. At a kind of bagatelle-table, the boys were invited to stake half-pence and pence, for cakes and sweetmeats. The young gambler, having put down his money, propels a ball up the table into one of the holes, which indicates either a prize or a blank, as the case may be. From inquiries made by parties interested in the Hopkins Street Ragged School, it was ascertained that there were many shops of the same kind within the vicinity of the school, all of which were thronged on Sundays, and that hundreds of similar gambling establishments were in full play in all parts of the metropolis. When the keepers of these gaming boards were told of the illegality of their conduct, they agreed to put down the practice, provided their neighbours would consent to do the like. It was eventually decided that it would be desirable to have a magistrate's opinion on the case, and summonses were accordingly taken out against the defendant, and another shopkeeper named Langford. Mr. Butler, Superintendent of the Hopkins Street Ragged School, proved, that on Sunday fortnight he went down to different sweetmeat shops in the neighbourhood of the school, accompanied by Mr. James Locke, of Regent Street, and there found a number of boys playing at some kind of game for cakes. As many as sixteen boys were in one shop, most or all of whom were attendants at the school. The defendant and his wife were superintending one of the gaming boards, at which boys were playing. Two boards were exhibited in Court; one was what is called a German bagatelle-board, and the other resembled a roulette board. The defendant expressed contrition for having unintentionally violated the law. *Mr. Hardwick knew of none that more richly merited the treadmill than such cases.* The proceeding was most illegal, and subjected the party to a penalty of £10, or a proportionate term of imprisonment; and such was the feeling of reprobation with which he regarded the offence, that he was determined in all future cases to inflict the severest penalty the law adjudged. This time he would admit the defendant's plea of ignorance, and would excuse the fine, on the condition that the boards were broken to pieces, and a promise given never to be guilty of the same conduct in future. Both defendants readily promised to have

their boards broken up by the police, and to abstain from committing the offence with which they were charged again. Mr. Butler said, he had been told that mere children were in the habit of spending as much as half-a-crown on Sundays, at this gaming pastime. Where they got the money from was a mystery, but might be guessed. Mr. Hardwick had no doubt whatever that these shops were promoters of crime. From gaming in youth robbery followed, and even crimes of a worse description. *As he before said, he was resolved to punish all future offenders in the severest manner possible.*

We may add that, immediately after the magistrate's decision, all the shops in the neighbourhood, known to have contained such boards, were visited by Mr. James Locke and Mr. Lowe—two members of the School Committee—accompanied by an inspector of police, who caused the gambling boards to be broken up before quitting the premises. In some cases, the parties had them broken up themselves, before their unwelcome visitors arrived. Every friend to Ragged Schools and to public morality must rejoice at this important and decided step, that has been taken for the removal of temptations so destructive to the best interests of these poor children. We trust that the officers of Ragged Schools, wherever needful, will embrace the first opportunity of doing a similar work for their own localities.

If, as Mr. Hardwick truly says, there can be "no doubt whatever that these shops are the promoters of crime," we think it is a point equally settled, that the London penny theatres are as bad, if not worse, and ought speedily to share a similar fate. In a former number we briefly referred to the subject, by giving a description of one we visited. Since then we have visited several others, (unlicensed,) of an equally immoral and pernicious character. Several communications have also been sent to us, giving descriptions of others, similar to those we have witnessed, and all agreeing that such places are the active "promoters of crime." We have sometimes thought it a curious sight, to see a Ragged School, a prison, and a penny theatre, all erected in the same vicinity—the one supported by Christian liberality, for the education of youth and the prevention of crime; the other supported by Government for a similar purpose, (although acting by very different means;) and the third actively engaged in corrupting the minds of the young, and leading them into paths of criminality and sin, from which the other agencies but too vainly strive to recover them. As one lamentable instance out of many others, showing the ruinous character of these places, we give the following case, supplied by a party under whose observation it occurred. He states, that the father of the girl in question is a steady and industrious man, bearing a good character. About twelve months since, his wife died, and the eldest daughter was appointed to remain at home in charge of her younger sister. But she soon associated with bad companions, and often when her father had given her money to purchase food for herself and sister, she has been known to starve the little girl, and spend the money at a low penny theatre in the New Road. At last, she was placed under the care of a neighbour, in her father's absence, who says that he often bestowed upon her more care and attention than upon his own children, but to no purpose. He has followed her at all times, and her principal resource has always been to the penny theatre. She gradually grew worse, became

insolent at home, and resisted all counsel and restraint, until at last she became a common wanderer in the streets. This abandoned course she has followed for nearly twelve months, although not yet fifteen years of age! She became so extremely depraved, that her father was forced to refuse her the shelter of his home, and thus she seemed left to drag out a brief career of wretchedness and shame. But, through the interposition of the City Missionary, she has been placed in a female penitentiary, where, by the grace of God, she may yet be rescued from so sad an end. When speaking of the case, he says, "From all the information I can obtain, she has been ruined, entirely by that awfully demoralizing exhibition in the New Road. I have heard many serious complaints made by the people against this nursery of crime." Surely this lamentable case speaks for itself; it is one of decided ruin, but its parallels could be counted by thousands, for, night after night, in these hot-beds of pollution, are the seeds of death and destruction being sown in the minds of ten thousand of the youth of the metropolis. Why should the policemen pass and repass the doors of these places, night after night, and never inquire into their character or conduct, when it is well known that, in a majority of cases, they are illegal? Why should the expenditure of public money be rendered needful in the support of prisons, penitentiaries, and Ragged Schools, for the prevention of crime, and these other places be allowed to promote it, when a single fiat of the authorities could sweep them all away? If they are to be tolerated at all, it is surely high time that a more strict supervision was exercised over them, by a system of visitation, and that every act of an immoral nature was visited by a severe penalty. Juvenile depravity continues to increase in the metropolis, notwithstanding the extensive efforts that are made to prevent it; and it may be fairly questioned, whether much of this is not owing to the immoral and aggressive agencies that are allowed to work, unmolested, in all parts of the metropolis, to an extent that almost threatens to overwhelm us.

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A GLANCE FROM LONDON BRIDGE.

BY OLD FATHER THAMES.

AGAIN am I on London Bridge, and the spirit of talkativeness comes over me irresistibly; listen, then, to a few observations of Old Father Thames.

This noble and majestic bridge, whose exterior is built of three kinds of granite—purple Aberdeen, grey Devonshire Haytor, and red brown granite of Peterhead—and whose centre arch is a hundred and fifty feet in the span, is well worthy of the city and the river. May it stride over the stream as sturdily as the old bridge did! A space of six hundred years was a tolerable time for a bridge to withstand the rushing waters of such a river as the Thames, with the tide rising and falling, and the floods occasionally prevailing. One might have supposed that Peter of Colechurch, who built it, had been an architect, or a stone-mason, rather than a priest; but, priest as he was, he

performed his work nobly. The number of well-dressed people who are passing me is prodigious. What an excellent thing it would be, could two Ragged School boxes be established, the one for those who go over the bridge, the other for those who pass under it.

Old London Bridge, begun in 1176, was finished in 1209. It had originally twenty arches, or spaces between the piers, for one was covered by a drawbridge to allow ships to pass. The road-way was forty feet wide, and two towers stood, one on each side of the eighteenth arch, close to the Southwark end; and on the centre of the bridge stood a beautiful chapel, dedicated to St. Thomas à Becket, called St. Thomas of the Bridge. Afterwards shops, or rather houses, were built on the bridge on each side, and in some places buildings were erected entirely across, with wide and lofty archways beneath them, the road-way of which was twenty feet wide in some parts, and only about twelve or fourteen in others. Hans Holbein, the painter, and John Bunyan, the author of Pilgrim's Progress, were among those who once lived on the bridge.

I wish every reader of the Pilgrim's Progress would lend the young pilgrims in Ragged Schools a helping hand on their way to heaven, for not only would it be doing a deed of Christian kindness, but show, also, that they were in earnest in going on pilgrimage themselves. How many are there who read in Holy Scripture the beautiful parable of the Good Samaritan, who never suspect that they are playing the hard-hearted part of the priest and the Levite, though they do this every day of their lives; but let me explain my meaning.

Some time ago, a lad, one of the Ragged School kind, threw a handful of mud at an old gentleman on this bridge, when the latter made an ineffectual blow at him with his silver-headed stick. "Lend me your stick, sir," said another lad, "and I'll give it him properly." The old gentleman unsuspectingly gave up his stick, when the young rascal directly made off with it. Now let us suppose half a dozen of such destitute and depraved lads playing their pranks on the bridge, the effect on the passers-by would be, perhaps, something of the following kind:—

"Where are the police?" says a thoughtless, wealthy man, "that they do not clear the bridge and the streets of such vagabonds. Newgate, or the tread-mill, or Botany Bay, is the fittest place for them"—so, like the priest, he passes by on the other side.

A lady now approaches—though shocked at their vulgarity, their impudence, and their immorality, she thus pities them, "Poor things! they know no better—we should make great allowance for their errors; they are destitute; my heart aches for them." And thus, having given utterance to her useless sympathy, without dreaming for a moment of embodying it in any useful act, like the Levite, she, too, passes on the other side.

At last comes by one who has a little more of the true Samaritan in his heart, and he is neither satisfied with pitying them nor punishing them, for he makes up his mind, according to his ability, to help them. He is not afraid of his "two-pences." He knows that no practical plan for their good can be carried on without money, and he

knows, too, that "God loveth a cheerful giver." But, if it so happens that he has no money in his purse, he has a heart in his bosom, and the glowing and beating of that heart urges and directs him, in one way or other, to be the friend of the destitute—the practical supporter of Ragged Schools. Oh, for more and more of this Samaritan spirit! It was well observed, at a public meeting the other day, that the poorer classes show sympathy for each other. "Hardly does it ever happen that any case of protracted, extreme destitution finds its way into the papers, without it appearing that some ragged Samaritan has shared his last loaf, or spent his last penny, to relieve the miserable being in the room up-stairs, or in the cellar."

Chroniclers tell us that David de Lindsaye, Earl of Crawford, a Scottish knight, in 1390 or in 1395, I forget which, overthrew on Old London Bridge the Lord John de Welles of England, in a joust. The victorious David, according to the customs of chivalry, might have sheathed his dagger in the throat of his vanquished and prostrate opponent, but instead of this he generously embraced his fallen foeman, exclaiming, "Live, Sir Knight! I fought without anger, and but for the glory of my native land." This forbearance on the part of the Scottish knight obtained him yet more credit than his valour. It is but barely three months since a Ragged School scholar, in going over the bridge, picked up a parcel, which, on opening, he found to contain bank-notes to a considerable amount. Such a parcel would have been a sore temptation to many in better circumstances, but poor as the boy was, he was honest, so he took the parcel to the nearest police-station, and left it there. Oh, for a thousand facts such as this, to plead in favour of Ragged Schools!

What a forest of masts is seen below the bridge! I cannot but look on the flowing river with increasing interest.—

> In the days of my youth our acquaintance begun,
> And it brings back old times to my view;
> Not only its waters have rapidly run,
> My life has run rapidly too.

What rejoicing hearts, dancing as the sun-lit sparkling waves, have sailed up the stream to Richmond and Hampton Court, and down the stream to Greenwich and Gravesend! And what sorrowing spirits have passed through Traitor's Gate, and under the portcullis at the Tower, regarding the place, not as a palace, but as a prison-house and a tomb! Sir Thomas More and my Lord Cromwell, the Earl of Surrey and the Duke of Somerset, well knew what the heart-ache was, ere the headsman put an end to their earthly troubles; and Anne Boleyn, Katharine Howard, and Lady Jane Grey, could have told a melancholy tale—nay, they tell a melancholy tale now—of the mutability of earthly grandeur; for they all, adorned with a glittering diadem, sat on a throne, and they all fell beneath the axe of the executioner. Queens as they were, the poor girls in the Tooley Street Ragged School yonder, well may pity them.

From this spot may be seen St. Paul's, the Monument, the Custom House, the Tower, and many other public buildings; but there are edifices of another kind, erected in nooks and corners of this great metropolis, which do me good when I look upon them. These

are the Ragged Schools in the different districts around. What but true philanthropy—what but the most determined benevolence—would think of erecting buildings, with the hope of doing good, in such places as Vine Street, Spitalfields; Twig Folly, Bethnal Green; King Edward Street, Mile End; Bere Street, Ratcliffe; Darby Street, Rosemary Lane; Field Lane, West Smithfield; Streatham Street, St. Giles's; Old Pye Street, Westminster; John Street, Mint; Grove Lane, New Cut; and Golden Lane, St. Luke's? Yet these buildings, with God's blessing, will yet become a glory to the land.

I said a little about looking at the foundation of the plans and projects in which we engage, and there will be true wisdom in doing so. Strong as Old London Bridge was—strong enough, indeed, to stand fire and water, and the wear and tear of six hundred summers and winters—time and change brought it down at last. Oh! let us turn from the things of time to those which are eternal, thinking less of an earthly and more of a heavenly immortality.

There are many places of interest up the river. Already have I spoken of Westminster Abbey, and of my musings within its time-honoured and influential walls. Near the Abbey is a statue of the gifted Canning, and I cannot gaze upon it without calling to mind the mournful pomp, the lengthened funeral procession, that, like a lagging stream, slowly wound its way to the cathedral, when the perishing remains of Canning himself were committed to the ground. Pondering on the mutability of all things, Old Father Thames was there. The dust of the philanthropic Wilberforce lies, also, beneath the pavement of the Abbey. In my younger days, I once walked many a long mile to gaze upon his face; and when, in after years, he was conveyed to his last resting-place, Old Father Thames was there. Campbell, too, the tuneful Campbell, is sleeping beneath the Abbey floor, the sleep that knows no waking. There was a goodly gathering when he was borne, "pale-faced on the bier," to the silent tomb, the "house appointed for all living;" many were the mourners at his place of sepulture, and Old Father Thames was there.

A few miles lower down the river is that hidden wonder of the world, the Thames Tunnel; the mighty completion of a mighty enterprise, effected in spite of difficulty and danger. There are different opinions entertained about the utility of the Tunnel, but there can be but one opinion among those who knew its architect, Sir Marc Isambard Brunel, as to his genius, his talents, his worth, and his piety. A few months ago, while the plumes were nodding on the hearse that bore him to his grave, I was bending over his remains. Not yet had the portals of the tomb closed upon him. Old Father Thames was the last that gazed on his coffin plate. Brunel has been beckoned above. I happen to know some passages of his private history, that highly illustrate the power of genius, the versatility of talent, the romance of affection, and the beauty of piety—

> What though disease her dreary shadows cast,
> And dimmed the sunny brightness of his brow—
> His sighs and tears are o'er, his pains are past,
> And all is peace: he is in glory now.
> The gathering clouds, that darkly round him rolled,
> Were lined with silver, edged with glittering gold.

No more his feet shall tread this guilt-stained earth,
Sorrow and sin are banished from his eyes,
For he has entered on his heavenly birth,
And scenes and sounds of bliss around him rise:
His are the golden crown and endless song
Of hallelujahs, bursting from the tongue.

But why do I thus dwell for a moment on a few of those who have distinguished themselves in the world? Simply to point out the moral which, common as it is, can hardly be graven too deeply on the memory, that earthly advantages are but for a season.—

"The boast of heraldry, the pomp of power,
And all that beauty, all that wealth e'er gave,
Await alike the inevitable hour:
The paths of glory lead but to the grave."

Many are the instances in which those in lowly circumstances have raised themselves to affluence and distinction. Hutton, the antiquarian, in his youth once stretched himself for the night on a butcher's block, not having money enough to pay for a lodging. Lackington, the great printer, went to a two-penny school, and was ever ready as the leader of a daring band of boys, to do every kind of mischief. Arkwright, so famous for his improvements in spinning cotton, was a poor barber's boy; and Gifford, the celebrated Editor of the Quarterly Review, was once one of the ragged train of Bamfylde Moore Carew, "King of the Beggars." How many were there, who would have helped these in their poverty, could they have known what characters they would become! And may not young people, who are now ragged and destitute, if assisted, even eclipse the reputation of those who have gone before them? At any rate, the advantage of attending a Ragged School will point them to a world where true joys are to be found, that will endure when this world shall have passed away.

Bear with me, ye unreflecting wealthy ones, in attempting to goad you to a deed of kindness; and pardon me, ye fair, if for a moment I have spoken lightly of the unembodied sympathy of woman. Old Father Thames is somewhat impulsive in his disposition, and, at times, unguarded in his expressions, but he would not willingly wound any one unnecessarily beneath the stars. Rather, much rather, would he praise than blame; but, indeed, you are robbing yourselves of much inward satisfaction, by withholding the effective aid that is in your power to bestow on the ragged and the wretched, by winning them from the paths of vice, and luring them to those of virtue.

And bear up courageously, ye open-hearted and open-handed supporters of Ragged Schools; and while ye double your diligence in a good cause, look upwards more humbly and more earnestly for that aid, which can alone insure you success. As Christian soldiers, press onwards for heaven, and be not ashamed of your colours, but say, as one has eloquently said and sung,—

"Let us carry them so that the world may trace
The crown that proclaims us of royal race;
As those who the darkness of earth have trod,
The children of light, and the sons of God."

SCENES IN THE HISTORY OF A RAGGED BOY.—No. I.—Poverty and Idleness leading to Crime.

A RAGGED SCHOOL FUNERAL.

It is with no ordinary feelings that we record the premature decease of the Ragged School boy, whose deeply interesting case is mentioned in a late number, in an article on the "Miseries and Demoralizing Influences of Lodging-houses." His singular discovery in one of those dens of infamy led to his immediate removal to the temporary Refuge of the King Edward Street Ragged School, where, in addition to medical attendance, he received every attention and comfort his critical situation required. Disease, however, had made rapid inroads upon his already enfeebled constitution. Starvation—absolute starvation—had added not a little to the poignancy of his sufferings. His youth, even, did not place him within the pale of hope. Lingering on, surrounded daily by kind and sympathizing hearts, ministering to his necessities, binding up the wounds of misfortune and neglect, pouring in the oil and wine of true Christian sympathy and benevolence, he continued for a period of five weeks, when death claimed him as his victim.

On the day of burial, groups of men and women, apparently conversing upon some kindred subject, were seen in the neighbourhood of the school —at the open doors were women and children, some calling down Heaven's blessing upon those who had endeavoured to soften down the sorrows of time, and to alleviate the sufferings of a distressed stranger. Numbers of the school children, long before the time of meeting, were waiting for admission. What has happened? might have been the inquiry of the stranger passing through the neighbourhood. Alas! alas! it was only what too often happens—the vicissitudes of time had contributed to add another to the long catalogue of the dead; and ere he had reached the age of manhood, the visions of his youth had faded, and he, drooping, passed away!

Some of the lads who had employment, (to their credit be it said,) voluntarily relinquished "half-a-day," that they might occupy a place in the mournful procession. At their own request, many of the elder boys were permitted to carry the remains of their former school-fellow (and the fellow-lodger of some) to the grave; others, dressed in the habiliments of mourning, were also permitted to take part in the ceremony, and bear the pall of their departed comrade; while all evinced their sympathy and testified their respect, by walking in procession to the grave-yard. Great efforts had that day been made, both by young and old, at clean hands and faces: the garments, in some few instances, were made to correspond. Old pieces of crape had also been begged or borrowed, and brought into requisition—the whole forming a striking contrast to the pageantry of mourning, as sometimes witnessed in the more wealthy portions of the metropolis. To the reflective mind, the whole scene was not only deeply interesting, but painfully grotesque; the tattered garments, the shoeless, capless, diminutive children—the veriest embodiments of human wretchedness—appeared fit emblems, and commemorative of their departed friend. Throughout the entire ceremony, their conduct was most exemplary —a serious and devout demeanour pervaded the whole; nor were there wanting those to shed the tear of pity over their once "lost" companion. One boy, formerly an associate, by living in the same lodging-house, wept most bitterly. His own destitute condition, contrasted by the lifeless corpse before him, may have contributed to his grief—grief which is almost beyond the conception of ordinary feeling; but a sorrow in which many, by the bitter realities of experience, could have joined.

Such are the miseries to which thousands of our juvenile population are exposed, that little comparatively is known respecting them. Here and

there one is saved from the moral pollution into which orphanage, want, or neglect have plunged them; the great mass—we say it with shame—is left untouched. Had it not been for the Refuge, temporary though it be, into which this poor lad was welcomed, he would have passed away from the arena of time unnoticed and unknown, and that under the most painful circumstances. Facts such as these demonstrate the importance of the efforts which are now being made, to ameliorate the condition of those from whom, unhappily, the hand of Christian sympathy and affection has too long been withheld. We trust a salutary influence may be exerted by this event, and that the improvement already commenced in this wretched neighbourhood may receive a speedy consummation.

THE LATE MR. J. W. LOCKING.

It is our painful duty to record the death of the originator and active promoter of the York Ragged Schools, Mr. J. W. Locking. The following brief account of his self-denying exertions, and the success with which these were attended, is presented, in the hope that other philanthropic individuals will be encouraged to emulate his noble example.

Some of the friends of the Wesley Place Sunday School were entertaining thoughts of commencing a Ragged Sunday School in Bedem, (a large court, with numerous passages, densely populated with Irish poor, and the lowest and most abandoned classes of the English,) when Mr. Locking, who had recently come to reside in York, and whose mind was already impressed with the importance of such schools, was introduced as a suitable person to be intrusted with its superintendence. On Sunday, the 7th of February, 1847, the locality was canvassed, and the object of the proposed school explained to the people; and on the following Sunday, February 14th, a commencement was made, when Mr. Locking acted as superintendent, and was assisted by Messrs. Smithies, Burdekin, Sanderson, etc. Mr. L. at once devoted his entire energies to the work; he grappled successfully with the difficulties which presented themselves at the outset, in the unruly conduct of the boys. His prudence and kindness, regulated by a wise discretion, very shortly gained an ascendency over them. Assisted by his coadjutors, he visited them at their homes, and thus became acquainted with scenes of misery and degradation, unknown to many of the oldest inhabitants of the city. Active measures were taken in the more extreme cases of distress, in administering to the wants of the body, and, in addition to visitation at their residences for the purpose of imparting moral and religious instruction, open air meetings were held in the square of the court on the Sabbath, for the last three summers. In these good works our late dear friend exerted himself to the utmost of his power, and it may be added, "yea, and beyond his power." One circumstance in connection with his labours in this district is worthy of notice, as illustrative of his sincere regard for the benefit of his fellow-creatures. He had previously been unfavourably disposed towards the principle of total abstinence, but he became so deeply impressed with the prevalence of drunkenness amongst this class of people, and the deplorable results attending it, that he signed the pledge, and zealously engaged in the advocacy of the cause.

The more intimately acquainted Mr. Locking became with the real condition of his ragged scholars, the more deeply was the conviction wrought upon his mind, of the imperative necessity of more enlarged and extended efforts being made. His

tall and slender form was often seen in the public streets, bending over a little bare-footed urchin, one of the number who formed his Sabbath charge, as he engaged in conversation with him, and learned that he was compelled by his parents, or by those who ought to have been his guardians, to adopt the practice of begging for his livelihood. The sympathies of his tender heart were drawn out towards this class of children. He had heard of the noble efforts which had been put forth in Westminster, Edinburgh, Aberdeen, and other places, and he resolved that similar measures should be adopted with the juvenile mendicants of York. But there were difficulties in the way, which would have been sufficient to damp the ardour of most benevolent individuals in the same circumstances. He was "but a youth," being in his 21st year, and comparatively a stranger in the city; and, with the exception of the friends of the Wesley Place Sunday School, under whose auspices the school in Bedern was conducted, the attention of the Christian public was not directed to this subject any more than in previous years. But Mr. Locking acted like one who felt that he was engaged in a great cause. He sought out the men of liberal hearts and means, and earnestly did he plead for the fatherless and neglected. All admired his zeal, but many questioned his wisdom. They shook their heads, and thought the scheme a wild one. But, nothing daunted, he persevered. The closing of one door was followed by the opening of another; and at length, he found himself supported by some of the most worthy and philanthropic inhabitants, including members of every Christian denomination. Public meetings were held, where the claims of the proposed institution were advocated, and funds were raised, and the requisite preparations made for a commencement on a small scale.

On the 22nd of February, 1848, the Daily Ragged School was commenced, the services of Mr. and Mrs. Walker, the present master and mistress, being engaged. Mr. Locking still undertook the superintendence on the Sabbath, and continued in the office up to the time of his last illness. He was likewise appointed Honorary Secretary, in conjunction with one of the clergymen of York. The attendance for the first quarter was thirty-nine, and in a few months the premises were found to be far too confined for the number of suitable applicants. The children received three meals daily, and were instructed in the rudiments of learning, and various branches of industrial occupation, which privileges are continued to the present time.

The institution has been increasing in extent and efficiency from its commencement, and has been well supported by the benevolent public of York and its vicinity. Its interests have been watched over by an active and vigilant Committee, who have used every endeavour to promote its usefulness. From twenty to thirty poor boys and girls have been furnished with suitable situations, most of whom are acquitting themselves creditably. Spacious and convenient premises were provided, and fitted-up in the autumn of last year, and have been four months in occupation, and the establishment is taking its stand amongst the leading charities of the city. The exertions of Mr. Locking have contributed not a little to these desirable results. His zeal on its behalf was constant, and his diligence untiring. From its first formation, he has laboured for its advancement in every possible way.

As superintendent of the Sabbath School, his lovely character was developed in all its varied excellences. He here gave full scope to the ardour of his spirit, whilst his patience and discretion were truly admirable. He was possessed of a lively imagination, and his condescension to the youthful mind was so complete, that no constrained or unnatural effort ever appeared. He seemed to see with the *eye*, and to feel with the *heart* of a child. Hence his manner was always pleasing, and his addresses interesting, impressive, and profitable. All teachers and

visitors at the school, who beheld his countenance during the delivery of an address, reflecting the smile of satisfaction from a hundred juvenile faces, felt that here was his *forte*. Without any disparagement to the *living*, we may say that, in this capacity, we cannot venture to hope "to see his like again."

In addition to the Ragged Schools, Mr. Locking was likewise the means of an individual being employed in York as City Missionary. He guaranteed, upon his own responsibility, to meet the expense for the first six months, and has been assisted in this good work by a few Christian friends. It is hoped that the present agency is but the germ of more systematized and extended operations in this department of the vineyard of the Lord.

It does not come within the purport of this sketch, to notice every way in which our departed friend exerted himself for the welfare of his species. It may just be remarked, that he took a most lively interest in, and was ever ready to assist in the promotion of, "whatsoever things were pure, or lovely, or of good report."

It now remains for us to say a few words respecting the closing scenes of his short, but useful life. In the beginning of the present year he caught a severe cold, which resulted in a serious illness. He so far recovered as to be able, in the course of a fortnight, to resume his avocations. On the 23rd of February, however, the attack was repeated, and terminated in fever. During the greater part of his illness, he was in a state of delirium, but even then his mind seemed to be engaged in the affairs of the Ragged School, and other "labours of love." On Sunday, the 3rd of March, there seemed reason to hope that the disease was taking a favourable turn, but in the evening he became very much worse, and about seven o'clock on the following morning, his spirit was called away to its eternal rest.

The interment took place at the York Cemetery, on Thursday, the 7th of March. The teachers and scholars of the Ragged Schools walked in procession, and great numbers, both of the genteel and lower classes of society, showed their respect for the departed by their presence on the occasion. According to a desire which he had expressed during his illness, the remains were carried from the chapel to the grave by four poor Irishmen, fathers of Ragged School children. A very suitable hymn was sung at the grave by the children, after the service, and before leaving the place they were permitted to look down upon the coffin. It was felt to be a time of sadness, nearly every one was in tears, and many wept aloud. They were conducted back to the school, and after partaking of tea, the mournful occasion was improved by two or three suitable addresses.

When we think of the early removal of so laborious a workman in the Christian field, we are ready to exclaim, "Thy way, O God, is in the sea, and thy path is in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known." The work is the Lord's, and we trust He will still carry it forward. He has taken one of his servants into an early rest, and we pray that he may raise up others to labour in his stead.

T. S.

HYMN sung at the Grave of the late Mr. J. W. Locking, at the York Cemetery, March 7th, 1850, by the Children of the York Ragged Schools:—

How mournful is this solemn day!
How dark its brightest light!
That our beloved teacher lay
A pale, affecting sight.

His face we now no more shall see;
His voice we cannot hear;
Lord, he can never speak of thee,
Nor teach us in thy fear.

The op'ning grave receives his dust;
All cold and dark he lies;
But, oh! his spirit, with the just,
Lives far above the skies.

Yonder, amidst that shining throng,
He endless rest has found;
Where saints and angels tune their song,
While Jesus smiles around.

Great Saviour! lead us in the way
Our friend so lately trod;
And, when we drop this frame of clay,
May we be found with God.

Poetry.

"ABOVE THE STARS."

"Above the stars," "Above the stars," the idiot boy would cry,
Oft when he sat beside the hearth, or looked upon the sky:
He learn'd it on his little form, within the Sabbath School,
Ere fever seized his brain, and robb'd his spirit of its rule.

His mother was a widow, and a poor, but honest soul,
Who sometimes found it hard, her doubts and murmurs to control:
"Where shall I look for help?" she said; "where shall I comfort win?"
"*Above the stars,*" "*Above the stars,*" her idiot boy chimed in.—

A stranger in the churchyard walked, amidst the silent dead,
He saw the youth beside a grave, and, "Where's your mother?" said;
"Above the stars," "Above the stars," the idiot boy replied,—
The stranger turned his head away, a starting tear to hide.

Oh, there is beauty in the words, and comfort in the thought,—
"Above the stars," "Above the stars,"—those wonders God hath wrought—
The wonders of his mighty hand,—but, oh! there shine above,
The greatest, noblest of his works—the wonders of his love.

Then let us, for the love of God, which He to us has shown,
Strive, to the ragged ones around, his mercy to make known;
And clothe, and feed, and teach them *here*, that when they come to die,
"Above the stars," "Above the stars," may be their home on high.

J. P.

THE RAGGED SCHOOL BOY.

LOST.

'Twas a night in December; a drizzling rain
Had been dropping all day—was still dropping amain.
I passed by an alley: there shivered a child,
His clothes all in tatters, his features all wild,
His hair was bematted, his feet were unshod,
As cold and as wet as the pavement he trod.
He looked in my face—such a look of despair!—
The picture of sorrow, the victim of care.
No father, no mother, no home had the boy,
An outcast, a lost one, a stranger to joy;
His parish the alley, the cellar, the lane—
His pillow the door-step, in cold and in rain;
Untaught and uncared-for, unclothed and unknown,
Poor, lost, little fellow! will none the child own?

FOUND.

Yes, come to the "Ragged School," open the door,
Look round: there's a face we have met with before;

'Tis the same little fellow we saw yesternight,
His cheek is yet pale, but his young eye is bright,
His hair is unmatted, it curls on his brow,
His arms—do they hang down in listlessness now?
Just watch him a moment, there's joy in his eyes,
As his hand all unskilled at such new work he tries.
He is found—do not leave him an outcast again,
But give him a shelter from cold and from rain;
Instruct him, and clothe him, and feed him awhile;
He'll pay you, o'erpay you in gratitude's smile.
Point, point him to Jesus, the friend of the poor,
And Jesus will bless both your basket and store.

Plans and Progress.

REWARD TICKETS.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE PEEP OF DAY," "LINE UPON LINE," ETC.

ONE of the choicest pleasures of a teacher is to distribute rewards. Not a child in the class—not the most animated, not the most needy, nor the most favoured—feels more delight in stretching out its hand to receive the tiny book, the neat work-bag, the warm stockings, or stout pinafore, than the teacher in presenting it; how much more when bestowing the most valuable gift, the precious Bible! But the satisfaction felt on these occasions arises, in a great measure, from the FREENESS of the gifts; and when the rewards are not simply gifts, but prizes purchased by tickets, the spirit of the scene is changed; gratitude has fled; the rewards, though really *gifts*, are regarded by the recipients as *wages*. Neither has the teacher the comfort of knowing that the most deserving children are the best rewarded—because tickets afford a very imperfect criterion of merit. Children detained at home by illness or domestic duties, may fail to obtain tickets for attendance or for punctuality; children unable, from want of time, to learn much, or correctly, may gain few tickets for lessons; while the regular scholar, and the quick learner, though perhaps less deserving, will gain many of both sorts. Complicated rules may be invented to guard against these inconveniences; and the school hours may thus be continually interrupted by a system of barter and exchange, of fines and forfeitures, producing frequent ill-humour in the taxed, and feeding the covetousness of the successful.

It is a fine observation, made by the Bishop of Sodor and Man, (Dr. Short,) that teachers should endeavour, in their dealings with their scholars, to imitate the dealings of God with his creatures. Our heavenly Father bestows rewards upon his servants, not in a *systematic* manner, but according to his sovereign wisdom. No one can count upon receiving any specific blessing for any specific service; and thus the freeness of the reward is made evident: it is shown to be of grace, and not of debt; to be a gift, and not wages. Is it not very important that the child should be taught to discriminate between gifts and wages? When it does any useful work for *another*, let it receive payment, but none for doing good to *itself*, by attending school and learning lessons. It is deceiving the child to lead it to suppose that he is conferring a benefit on his teacher, when it

is the teacher who confers it upon the child. Systematic rewards tend to implant, or rather to cherish, this notion in the young mind—for it is a very natural idea: a mother discovered it in the mind of a very young creature. After representing to the child its dependence upon her care, she proceeded to show her own independence of the child, and asked the question, "Could not I do without you?" "No," replied the child, "you would have nobody to teach lessons to." There is in many a school those amongst whom the same notion prevails, and surely it is a very hurtful, as well as false notion.

But the arguments already adduced apply to those schools where the children of *honest* parents attend. Where the scholars belong to another class—even to the most depraved—a new and most formidable set of objections arise. It is true that the temptations to dishonesty, afforded by tickets, is felt, even among the best principled and brought-up classes; but how much more fearfully must it operate, where dishonesty is the principle and the *habit?* The ragged children have attained, also, a skill in deception, which it would be hard for any ingenuity in the teacher to meet. How necessary it is, therefore, that no immediate advantage, that no apparent expediency, should lead to the adoption of a system, that would open a fertile field for the practice of dishonesty. No plans of the kind are required where the teacher gains the hearts of his pupils, and has discovered the secret of interesting their minds. The constant aim of every teacher ought to be, to gain those hearts, and to discover that secret; and he should despise all mercenary methods of obtaining influence. Missionaries in foreign countries regard bribery as pernicious in its results; they could fill their schools and chapels if they would have recourse to it; but they have found the good effect—apparent and temporary; the evil—real and permanent. Let the Ragged School Missionary profit by the experience of his distant and elder brethren. Let him seek to bind the hearts of the destitute to himself by nobler bonds than barter and exchange—even the bonds of love—bonds of the same *nature*, though lower far in *degree*, as those with which the Saviour, by his Spirit, draws them to Himself and the Father.

THE WRONG END OF THE LEVER.—I know some good people, among whom I can count half a score of ministers, who try very hard to keep bad books and periodicals out of the family circle. There is no end to their talk against these things. It is not their fault, if those who look up to them for advice do not understand what they think of French novels, and things of that sort. Still these publications, like the Egyptian frogs in old times, find their way into the families of these people, in spite of all their efforts, and they cannot keep them out. What is the reason the lever they use is not effective? It is a good lever enough. Yes, but these people are bearing down upon the wrong end of it. They seem to forget one of the plainest laws of moral mechanics, if I may so speak. They ought, in their crusade against this evil, TO FIND SOMETHING TO PUT IN ITS PLACE.—*Evangelist.*

A Christian should never say, "he has nothing to do." It was not for nothing that we were called out of nothing, and if we hide our talent in the earth we shall lose our treasure in heaven.—*Mason.*

Our opportunities are like our souls, *very precious*, but if they are lost, they are irrecoverably lost.—*Ibid.*

LECTURES TO THE OFFICERS AND TEACHERS OF RAGGED SCHOOLS.

THE Third Lecture, by Mr. GEORGE WILSON, (*concluded from page* 72.) SUBJECT—*The Means employed for the Improvement and Elevation of the Degraded and Vicious Portions of the People.*

IT was, also, in the year 1799, that the Religious Tract Society was formed; this was the parent, in 1804, of the British and Foreign Bible Society. About this time, also, Joseph Lancaster aroused the public mind to the importance and practicability of affording education, by day schools, to the lower classes of the population, on his system; and, in 1805, the Lancashire (now the British and Foreign) School Society was formed.

The Magdalen, the Philanthropic Society, and the Female Penitentiary, were established to meet the cases of the fallen and the guilty. These efforts all proceeded on a new principle, (at least new in its application to such,) the principle of love. They met man as a rational creature, possessed of a soul—an immortal soul—and appealing to his reason and his immortality, brought the love of God in contact with his intellect and his heart.

The Village Itinerancy Society, and the Home Missionary Society, subsequently established in 1819, proceeded on the same principle—love; and were formed to carry the purifying and conservative influences of the Gospel to the neglected hamlets of our country; and wherever a station became established, Sunday Schools, and the circulation of religious tracts and the Scriptures, were sure to follow.

It is pleasing to contemplate the gradual, although slow progress of Christian efforts. One good work led the way and opened the door for another. Private Christians had been content to pay others to carry on benevolent efforts for them, until about the year 1825, when the personal efforts of individual Christians began to be exerted in connection with our several congregations, under the denomination of Christian Instruction Societies, and subsequently, District Visiting Societies. Their service was personally to visit the abodes of the neglected portions of the population, in the vicinity of their various places of worship, and there, by means of religious tracts and the Scriptures, and personal appeals, to endeavour to awaken the attention of the poor to concern for the salvation of their souls.

These devoted men and women, however, found it all but impossible to penetrate the abodes of the vicious and the vile, in those parts of the metropolis which appeared to be only accessible to a well-armed police, and this led to the formation, in 1835, of the London City Mission, which, under God, has been the means of conducting us to the root of many of our social evils, and bringing up to our view the origin and source of crime and suffering. It has also been the parent of a new class of operations, which, if properly conducted and sustained, cannot fail to destroy the seed and source of evils, which, had they been left unchecked, would have grown to a mighty power, subversive of all order, security, and peace in the community.

The City Missionary found the adult portions of the criminal population of our great metropolis, living not only in districts peculiarly their own, but under the influence of habits, laws, and associations, which formed an all but impenetrable barrier to their rescue.

We can only attribute it to the wonderful providence of God, in raising up suitable agents for the work, and working also on the minds of men by their instrumentality, that any good has been effected amongst the criminal portion of the population; but that extensive good has been effected we know, and to God we give the glory.

Some examples were then given, showing the beneficial effects which have resulted to the criminal portions of the population, from the labours of the City Mission agents.

Some of the difficulties in the way of rescuing adults from a course of evil, although they had become penitent and anxious to reform, were pointed out; and

the wretched condition of their neglected progeny was referred to, as suggesting the first idea of Ragged Schools. The circumstances which led to the foundation of the first Ragged School in the Old Stable, the rapid progress of such schools, as also their influence on our criminal juvenile population, and through the children on the parents, were pointed out; and the "Refuge" was described as an indispensable adjunct to the Ragged Schools, and to the preparation of suitable objects for Emigration.

Model lodging-houses, sanitary regulations for improving the localities in which an over-crowded population reside, sewerage, an abundant supply of water, dwellings for the working classes, affording room to observe the common decencies of life—these were referred to as projects in embryo, of a character to act physically upon our poor as well as vicious portions of society, and not only to raise those already fallen, but prevent multitudes from falling into vice and crime. But while these, when brought into operation, will be valuable auxiliaries, our chief dependence and hope is in the mental and moral agencies brought to bear upon the minds, and consciences, and hearts of fallen men, by means of the Gospel and religious education.

The spread of Sunday Schools through the length and breadth of the land, although generally diverted from the lower and ragged classes, to which they were originally devoted, afforded a platform for the spread of "the knowledge of the true God, and Jesus Christ whom He has sent," surpassing in extent and efficiency all that has occurred in any country or in any age, since the Divine Founder of Christianity was on our earth. The almost universal spread of the Scriptures through our metropolis and country, and the extension of religious education, by means of the Ragged School system, to the youthful portion of the lowest and the vilest of our species, together with the agency of Missionaries, Christian Instructors, and District Visitors, who carry the Scriptures to the abodes of the adults, and enforce its contents in the spirit of its Divine Founder. By all these means the Gospel is brought in contact with those who would never have sought it, and from the happy results which have already followed these holy efforts, we are encouraged to hope, that prolonged and enlarged exertions will be followed with corresponding increased benefit and blessing.

Allusion was subsequently made to the great good effected by the efforts of those connected with Temperance Societies; and it was recommended, that if we would effectually restrain men from the enticing influences of the public-house, we should provide them with a substitute similar to that afforded by the Working Man's Institute, recently established in Pear Street, Westminster. He described this institution, and apologized for the length to which he had been led, by remarks which were but desultory; that he had only sketched a faint outline of what he had intended to have fully brought before them; and retired with regret, that he should have so inadequately dealt with a subject so full of pleasure, with reference to the present, and of hope, with reference to the future.

HINDES MEWS RAGGED SCHOOL.

About twelve months since, a number of lads connected with this school, formed themselves into a little society for moral and intellectual improvement. On the 5th of March they held a social meeting, attended by the members, teachers, and friends. From a Report read on that occasion by one of their number, it appears that they have now a small library, containing about forty volumes of useful books, besides periodicals, and that accommodation is afforded them in the upper school-room for reading, writing, and conversation on various subjects of interest and usefulness. About thirty lads have now joined the society, all of whom seem delighted with, and are profiting much by their privileges. The addresses delivered on the occasion were very appropriate, chiefly bearing upon the relative and social duties of life. That of Mr. Tilke was peculiarly valuable, as it was chiefly a relation of his own experience, and showing how possible it is, by good conduct and persevering industry, for those who may be almost friendless in the world, to raise themselves to a position of comfort and respectability. We trust that all the affairs of the little company may be managed with prudence, and that they may continue to "go on and prosper."

The Children's Gallery.

THE HONEST RAGGED BOY.

Some people think that all the poor ragged boys are thieves. They do not believe there is a kind heart or an honest one among them all. Did I ask you to point me out a thief in the street—the man with a ragged coat, or boy with a torn jacket, would be the first you would think of. Now, some of the ragged boys *are* thieves, but it does not follow that, because a boy is very poor, and often very hungry and very cold, he is sure to be a thief. You would not be pleased if we told you, that it was only because you had got a nice home and kind parents that you were honest; and that, if you were very poor, you would be very wicked. Nor is it so with all the ragged boys. Some of them are not only honest, but they have also very kind hearts. Many of them love and pity each other. They love their parents, and do all they can to help them. Just think of this poor boy, whose mother was blind; she could do very little for herself, much less for him, but that did not hinder him from helping *her*. There he stood, cold and hungry, and half naked, at the bottom of "Mutton Hill," lean and withered, for he was a growing boy, and growing boys require much food, and he had little; he had grown up tall, and thin, and weakly, like a plant in a barren soil. Some people seeing him stand there might have said, He's waiting a chance to pick pockets; others might well have wondered what he was doing, for there he stood, his hands to his back, his back against a wall, and his feet close together. Some might have said, How lazy he looks; so he did; but looks will not always do to judge by, for, idle as this ragged boy looked, he was standing there *to try and get something to feed his blind mother with*. Sometimes, if he looked out, the brokers gave him a penny or two-penny job, but not often; then he would buy a quarter of an ounce of tea-dust, a half-penny worth of sugar, and a penny worth of bread, for himself, his mother, and brother. I stopped to speak to him before I turned down a court to visit a sick person. He was one of our Ragged School Evening Scholars; he touched his—it will hardly do to call it a cap, it was not *half* a cap—but he touched the rag upon his head very respectfully, and told me, on my asking if he had no work, that he had nothing to eat, and had no stock-money to buy fruit. Well, I lent him a trifle, directing him where to repay it. Perhaps you might think that, as he, his mother, and his brother, were so hungry, he would lay it out for food; but, *no*, he traded properly with it, hungry as he was, and there was my shilling left at the School for me as I directed. He had good success, made perhaps three journeys to Covent Garden in a day, besides selling what he bought each time, and supporting his blind mother.

My dear children, we wish we had half the money some of you lay out unprofitably, to save from slow starvation many, very many, such instances as this of an honest ragged boy.

SELF-DENIAL.

A nurse, returning from a morning walk much earlier than usual, with a screaming little boy in her arms, was met at the hall door by his anxious Mamma, to inquire into the cause of such a burst of passionate crying. "Oh, Ma'am," said the terrified nursemaid, "I could hardly get him home; we met a ragged child in the street, without shoes or stockings, and Master Edward *would* pull his shoes off to give to the child, and because I would not let him do it, he has thrown himself into this violent passion." A few kind, soothing words from his Mamma, and the promise of a penny to give the ragged child when he was taken for another walk, subdued the turbulent temper, and restored the happy smile of tranquillity; and for months after that promise, the little hand was held out for the penny, as duly as the morning walk. His nurse, in passing shops, would show him cakes, toys, etc., but

nothing could divert him from his purpose; he had learned to lisp the little story his Mamma, in *her infancy*, had been taught to repeat; and had listened to the incomparable hymn of Dr. Watts,

"Whene'er I take my walks abroad,
How many poor I see," etc.,

from brothers and sisters older than he, until his little heart was full. The story ran thus:—

As Miss and Master went up town,
They met a poor boy coming down,
All rags and tatters, pale and wan,
Miss saw him first, and thus began,—
"Look, brother Robert, there's a poor lad;
How pale he looks, and meanly clad,
I'll tell you, brother, what we'll do,—
We went to our Aunt's the other day,
She gave us a penny, to spend in play,
We'll give it to this poor lad;—
Here, little boy, without a hat,
Take this penny"—"And take that:
We don't want it, but you do."
"God bless you Miss, and Master too."

The initials (*and collected by*) E. H. B., in the Ragged School Union Magazine, prove better than words the sincerity of the baby-boy, when he would have given his own shoes to cover the feet of the destitute mendicant. (His affectionate aunt sends the anecdote.)

Little children, "to do good and distribute forget not, for with such services God is *well* pleased." Do not defer till you can do much—but remember the encouraging words of our blessed Lord, "*She did what she could*," and go and do likewise.

A GOOD EXAMPLE.

We have often thought, how well it would be, if boys and girls who have got happy homes, kind parents, plenty of food and clothing, and more pocket money than they always spend in a useful manner, would learn to pity and help the poor ragged children. How much good they might do! How pleasing it would be to them, if they lived till they were old, to think that, when they were so very young, they helped a poor friendless boy out of his misery! Now, this is just what the poor boys sometimes do for one another—as we shall soon show you. About six months ago, a tall, hungry-looking boy, came to a Ragged Evening School. His clothes were not so very ragged, but they were very dirty. You would scarcely have known he had a shirt on, for, although he was very often near to the "blind alley," he never thought of having it washed. He looked so starved-like. He never sat at a table to take his meals, for he had no home, and he just lived on what bits of bread he could get, when walking about the streets. His father and mother were dead, and he had no one to care for him. For several months he slept on some straw, in the corner of an old stable in Golden Lane. In the morning he rose up, shook off the straw, and went into the streets to get some food. While thus wandering about, he found his way to the Ragged School.

One evening, when the master went to the school, he found a number of the boys standing together, talking very seriously. He allowed them to stand for some time, and then he asked them what they were doing. One boy said, "Please, Sir, we've been trying to raise a trifle among us for that poor fellow, for he has got nothing to eat—he's got no home." One boy had given a penny, another a half-penny, another a farthing, just as they could spare it, and some gave more, so that, when the "collection" was counted, they had got 1*s.* 6*d.* Some conversation followed, as to the best way of laying it out for him. One boy said, "It aint much good in us doing this, for we can't keep him; we must try to get a job for him—we must try to get him work." Another proposed, that they might "speak for him" at a manufactory in the neighbourhood, and get him some employment there. "No," said a boy, "we must n't send him there, they would soon kill him; it's so unhealthy, he could not live in it." "But his clothes are so bad," said one, "and he's so dirty, no one would give him a job." They then agreed to beg or borrow some better clothes for their poor neighbour, in order to put him in the way of being a better friend to himself. Now, some of these poor boys were scarcely better off than he. Perhaps some of these had to want a meal, in order to spare the pence they gave, for the greater number had to provide for themselves. One boy walked about four miles for an old coat to give him; and another, who gave his pence with the rest, we saw the other day in Ludgate Hill, selling steel rings; and some of them have got no beds to sleep upon,

but only a bundle of rags on the floor. But, at the Ragged School, they had learned to keep themselves clean—they found their master kind to them, and they had learned to show kindness to one another.

An important lesson may be learned from the conduct of these boys, by those who have enough *and to spare*. They had nothing to spare, for most of them gave *all* they had, yet that little all they cheerfully gave, to buy food for the homeless boy. "Blessed is he that considereth the poor; the Lord will reward him in the time of trouble."

WHEN WILL IT BE MAY?

When it is winter the trees are bare; there are no pretty buds, no gay blossoms, and no sweet fruit. But spring soon follows winter, the green leaves appear, and the bud and the blossom and the fruit soon come. Much more pleasant is it to see the trees clothed in beauty, than to see their naked branches laden with snow, or rocking in the wind; and every one longs in winter for the return of May.

How sad it is to see, in the life of some people, a winter that seems as if it would never come to an end! We look for the buds and the blossoms of goodness, but childhood, and youth, and middle age, come and go, and summer seems as if it would never come. When will it be May?

Let us early learn to fear God, early learn to know the Bible, early learn to pray to God, early choose the way to heaven—and our barren winter will then soon be gone; then it will soon be May; and we shall be, not a bare stick, not a vile weed, in our Father's garden, but something green, and good, and useful. Then we shall be a comfort to ourselves, a blessing to others, and a delight to God. S. W. P.

THE LITTLE GIRL WHO BUILT A RAGGED SCHOOL.

"What are you doing, Charlotte? You seem very busy and very happy this evening," said a lady to a little girl, who was employed by her. "I am sewing the covers on some of our Sunday School books, ma'am; they have been torn by being used so much; and I told teacher, if she would let me have them, I would sew on fresh covers—and so I brought them here, ma'am; and, as I have done my work, I thought you would not be angry if I employed myself in this way." "Oh no, my little girl, I am glad to see you so industrious; and when you have done, come and tell me what you do in the Sunday School, for I have often heard of them, and should like to know all about them." Charlotte now worked with greater diligence, because her mistress spoke so kindly, and because she wished to tell her all about the Sunday School. The books were soon finished, and then Charlotte explained what was the practice in Sunday Schools; how the children were assembled twice every Sabbath, and taught to read the Bible; and that the teachers explained that even little children had sinful hearts, and that for their sins they would die for ever, if Jesus Christ had not come into the world to save sinners; but that "whosoever believeth in him shall not perish, but have everlasting life." "This is all very kind and true, and you ought to love your teachers very much, Charlotte; but who pays them for taking so much trouble?" "Oh, ma'am, they are not paid at all; they do it because they love God, and that makes us love them all the more." "But who pays for the Bibles, and books, and tracts, which they give you?" "The teachers do, ma'am; but sometimes kind friends send money to the superintendent." "Well, then," said her mistress, "I am so much pleased with what you have told me, that as soon as Mr. H—— comes home, I will ask him to send some money by you next Sunday." Mr. H—— loved his wife, and cheerfully gave an order for £10; and need we say that Charlotte's heart beat with joy as she carried that treasure, and that her eyes glistened when she gave it to the superintendent, and said, "If you please, sir, my mistress has sent you this order for £10, to buy books for the Sunday School!" The kind-hearted man looked at the order, and said, "Your mistress is very good, and we should all feel greatly obliged to her; but, my dear little girl, it is not for us; it says, 'Pay the Ragged School £10;' so you must thank your mistress, and say I will give it to the master of that school." Poor Charlotte's heart was now so sad, she could have cried at her disappointment. On Monday morn-

ing Mrs. H—— saw Charlotte looking very downcast, and inquired the reason. Charlotte said, "If you please, ma'am, you gave me an order from master for £10 for the Sunday School, and our superintendent told me to thank you for it, but it was written for the Ragged School"—and here the poor child burst into tears. "Never mind, my dear," said Mrs. H——; "leave off crying, and perhaps Mr. H—— will give you the same for the Sunday School." Charlotte said she did not cry because she was jealous of the Ragged School, for that wanted money more than her own School, but it was her disappointment that made her weep. The next week an order for £10 was sent, rightly directed to the superintendent. Charlotte's mistress used to ask every Monday what had been taught on the Sabbath, and God was pleased to bless what Charlotte related. Soon afterwards, Mrs. H—— was taken ill, and Charlotte was often asked by her mistress to read to her, and was in constant attendance upon her till she died. Before her death, which was a very happy one, she called her husband to her side, and said she owed her conversion to the teachings of Charlotte, and wished him, as her dying gift of love, to send £100 to the Ragged School, about which Charlotte had often told her mistress. Mr. H—— instantly gave the promise, and soon afterwards sent the money; but this was not all: he had loved his wife most dearly, and frequently thought what she would wish him to do. When she had been dead twelve months, he gave another £100 to the School, and promised to give yearly rewards of money to those boys and girls who kept their places after they left the Ragged School. But his work of love was not yet done: he went again to the master of the School, and said, "I am not satisfied; I want to do something more; tell me what you require?" The master explained that their rooms were not large enough, and that they should be thankful for a subscription to help to build a new School. Mr. H—— went home, wrote to his surveyor to find out a piece of land in the neighbourhood fit for the purpose, and buy it; he then drew a plan of the Ragged School, and ordered a builder to erect it, and wished that the teachers should always regard it as a tribute of affection to the memory of a much-loved wife, who had gone to Jesus through the teachings of Charlotte. Little did that Sunday School girl think, that there was any connection between her act of sewing the old covers on her books and the building of a Ragged School. But God, who maketh all things to praise him, blessed Charlotte in her work of love, and made her the instrument of building a large and handsome School, where thousands of poor children will be taught the way to glory. How happy must Charlotte be each time she passes that School, and what a beautiful crown will be placed on her head when she leaves the world, and joins her mistress among the angels in heaven! Dear children, often think of Charlotte; and whatsoever your hand findeth to do, do it with all your might. Show how much you love your Saviour and your teachers, by speaking to others, when you can, of what is taught in the Sunday School.—*Sunday School Magazine.*

ALL CAN DO SOMETHING.

A LITTLE boy, brim-full of fun,
Running as hard as he could run,
Plunged in a pond head over heels,
Among the fishes and silver eels.
His elder brother caught his hand,
And brought him safely back to land;
The second fish'd his floating cap;
His sister cried at his mishap;
And all directly homeward came,
Dreading to hear their father's blame:
His kindness laid their fears at rest;
They told the truth—and truth is best.

He heard their talk; then, smiling, said,
(Patting the first upon the head,)
"Your courage saved your drowning brother;
Receive this book: and now another
I give the second for his aid:
But what for you, my little maid?
You nothing did—you only cried;
And yet, your right is not denied:
You little did, but that was good—
Your little was just what you could;
To you an equal gift is shared—
Your kind desire I now reward."

Thus, Christians, help poor dying souls,
With all the means your power controls;
Stretch forth the hand, some burden bear,
Or raise your heart in fervent prayer;
The Lord of men, the God most high,
Approves you if you only cry. J. K. P.

Intelligence.

JOHN STREET RAGGED SCHOOL, MINT,

In connection with the Southwark Sunday School Society.

On Friday Evening, February 22nd, 1850, a Public Tea Meeting was held at this School, to commemorate its Eighth Anniversary. The room was filled with a respectable company at an early hour; the Chair being taken by the Rev. James Sherman.

About seventy of the scholars also partook of tea, and afterwards repeated several portions of Scripture. They were affectionately addressed by the reverend Chairman, and then dismissed; Joseph Payne, Esq., giving each of them a slice of cake, which seemed to give the worthy counsellor, as well as the Scholars, great satisfaction.

The Secretary then read the Report, wherein it was stated, that, although the number of scholars was less this year, yet a great amount of good had been done, of which several pleasing instances were given. The scholars, by subscribing a half-penny or penny at a time, had purchased twenty Bibles, thirty-six Testaments, and fourteen hymn-books. Three of the Bibles sold to the boys were large ones, at 3*s.* each. Another boy had left the school as an Emigrant to Australia, making the fifth scholar from this school; and his mother has since subscribed 2*d.* per week to the Emigration Fund of the Ragged School Union, as an expression of her gratitude for the kindness shown her boy.

The Girls' Working Class had progressed favourably; the clothes made being sold to the scholars at the cost price of the materials, gave them many comforts during the past winter, which they had hitherto been strangers to. Eleven girls had gone to service, and were doing well.

The Meeting was addressed by Mr. Anderson, Mr. Churchill, (Treasurer of the Southwark Sunday School Society,) who pleaded for a liberal supply of funds, the Society being greatly in debt, and Joseph Payne, Esq., who closed his speech with some animating verses.

The Chairman then concluded the Meeting with the doxology and blessing.

HULL INDUSTRIAL RAGGED SCHOOLS.

The First Annual Meeting of the above Schools took place in the large room of the Mechanics' Institute, Hull, on Wednesday Evening, February 27th, the Mayor of Hull (T. W. Palmer, Esq.) in the Chair.

The Meeting was well attended, and much interest excited by various speakers. The following remarks, by the Rev. Charles Prest, are striking and appropriate:—

"Be prepared not to shrink from the child because he is wretched. Are we to shrink from it? Are we to shrink from their bad hearts and evil ways? Are we to shrink from their criminality? I know there is an instinctive desire to shrink from a contact with anything like this, and from a criminal contact all should shrink—but that is not what I mean. It is a morbid feeling which shuns contact with misery—which shuns a contact with bad hearts—which shuns a contact with vice, or even crime. There may be a kind of easy-going virtue in all that, but we want, in a world constituted as this is, a sterner and a more practical virtue. We want a virtue that will bring intelligence into contact with ignorance. We want a virtue that will bring respectability, elevation, and comfort, into contact with wretchedness. We want a virtue that will bring good hearts into contact with bad ones. We want a virtue that will bring excellence, religion, and everything that is good, in contact with crime. We want this contact to be brought about by the philanthropic and the good. The wretchedness that one man suffers another ought to look upon. The misery endured by one portion of our species ought to be looked upon by us all—and if there be a bad heart, the influence of a better should be thrown around it. It should go in the midst of this wretchedness—let the wretched feel its sympathy; let the people with bad hearts feel the force of better ones; and let those who are deeply sunk in crime, feel that there is a sympathy, high-born, noble, Godlike, intended for their cure. . . . . The object that you have in the establishment and maintenance of these schools is, to make these children good

in their varied relations of life. They will, many of them, live to be men and women; and you design to make them good as fathers and mothers—good for the present as children—good as masters or servants. Masters, say some? Aye, masters! What is to prevent any of these boys being masters? Who does not remember the indomitable perseverance of George Stephenson, working his way up from his solitary slavery in the coal-pit, to be the engineer of railways and the guest of kings? Give human nature credit for what God has put into it, and act as though we give human nature credit for being created like unto God. Don't be parsimonious in your cultivation of that which will repay you so well. You cannot be too lavish upon it. Lavish upon it? Nay, that is another blunder—you can't *lavish* anything upon it. Do your utmost, only do it properly. . . . But these schools may easily be defended on the ground of sound and general political economy. Can we in any way decrease vagrancy in the state? Can we do that? Can we, by these schools—indeed, are we not doing something, not only to decrease vagrancy, but to destroy it? And pray what is vagrancy? The theory, I suppose, of a properly ordered state is this—a condition in which every individual in the state shall contribute to the well-being and safety of every other being in the community. I believe that is one great and fundamental principle of all true political economy. Now, then, as far as vagrancy may be concerned, what contribution have you from it to the well-being of the state—to its safety and to its security? None at all. Vagrancy takes everything from the community, and returns nothing but misery and burden, outrage, crime, and danger. Now, if the intelligence and wealth of this country should be so directed as to make these schools and similar institutions, either by national grants or voluntary contributions, tend to the abatement or the destruction of vagrancy, this danger would be lessened, or altogether prevented.'

In referring to the above Meeting, the Editor of the *Hull Packet* says: "It is a cause, in the promotion of which the man of the deepest piety may, with perfect justice and propriety, unite with the politician or the mere self-seeker; for it is recommended alike by Divine precepts, and by considerations of worldly policy and individual prudence. In truth, it lies at the root of all other reforms, and must constitute the very foundation and ground-work of all righteous and enlightened attempts at the elevation and improvement of our fellow-men. So long as *any* class of society is neglected, and suffered to grow up in ignorance of its duty alike to God and to man, so long it is hopeless to expect that the nation of whom it forms a part will be either happy, contented, or peaceable. But, as we have long since said, it is not at all a question between education and non-education. There is no such thing as a state of *non-education*. The school of vice is ever open to all comers; and if we neglect to train up the children of the poor in paths of virtue, they will grow in the practice of vice, as surely as thistles and noisome weeds will spring up in the untended garden. The true question then is—Education in vice, or education in virtue? And if the latter be decided upon, then comes this other question—Shall we educate the boy or correct the man?—begin at the source, or far down in the stream? Religion and common sense dictate the former; it is the best, the easiest, and we verily believe, the only effectual course to take."

DOVER RAGGED SCHOOL.

OUR readers will be pleased to learn, that a Ragged School has been established in Dover, and progresses very favourably. The room is open every evening, from six till eight o'clock, with an average attendance of one hundred children, and is well supported by voluntary teachers. The children are of the proper class—poor and very ignorant; some of them did not even know the name of the Saviour. A Girls' School is shortly to be opened in a different neighbourhood, which we trust will be attended with equal success.

WALSALL.

A RAGGED SCHOOL has been in operation for some time in Walsall. A friend connected with it thus writes: "We found 171 children in six courts, eighty-nine of whom attended no school. Shortly afterwards, we opened a Ragged School, and have since had premises built upon rental, at which there is an attendance of ninety children."